

Council on Postsecondary Education
March 25, 2002

Committee on Equal Opportunities Report 1997-2002 KY Plan and OCR Partnership

The Committee on Equal Opportunities met February 11, 2002. The council staff reported that Kentucky's public postsecondary institutions continue to make progress toward achieving the commitments outlined in the Partnership Agreement with the U. S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights and *The 1997-2002 Kentucky Plan for Equal Opportunities*. The partnership agreement is on track to be completed by December 31, 2002. A summary of the committee's activities follows.

Committee Actions

At its October 15, 2001, meeting, the CEO appointed a subcommittee to review the current waiver process and recommend improvements. At the February meeting, the subcommittee reported that the administrative regulation that governs the process is satisfactory but suggested ways in which it could be applied more consistently. For example, subcommittee members thought it would be helpful if the institutions used a common format for providing information in support of a waiver request.

The CEO also approved a recommendation by the subcommittee to add an additional step to the waiver process. An institution will now request a waiver and outline its strategies for addressing deficiencies at one meeting and at the next meeting will report on actions taken to implement the strategies. At the second meeting, the committee will take action on the waiver.

The committee asked that the CEO chair make a formal report to the council at each meeting to ensure that members of the council are informed about the committee's work.

The institutional equal opportunity representatives reported on plan-related activities on their campuses. The CEO agreed that time would be set aside at each meeting to hear a report on each institution.

The committee will periodically hold study sessions on the Sunday evening prior to its regularly scheduled meetings.

Reports to the Committee

The council staff updated the committee on the status of the council's 2002-04 budget request, KSU enhancement, the federal land-grant match, and the Carver Hall, Hathaway Hall, and Young Hall renovations.

The Education Professional Standards Board reported on Kentucky's progress in implementing new PRAXIS II standards for teacher certification. The EPSB has raised the cut-off scores for many of the test components and has lowered the cut-off scores for a few components. The EPSB will have the results of the first application of the new standards in April. The committee asked EPSB staff to attend the April 15 meeting to discuss the performance of institutions in Kentucky.

Kentucky has supported 32 scholars in the SREB Doctoral Scholars Program since 1994. Thirteen scholars have completed their doctoral degree. Applications are being taken for the fall 2002 class. Successful applicants will be identified in July 2002. There are over 120 program graduates -- the most recent graduate is Dr. Thomas Edison of the University of Kentucky with a Ph. D. in Spanish and Italian. The University of Kentucky had the largest number of doctoral scholars to graduate in 2001 of any university in the 16 SREB states. Nationally, more than 400 scholars in 35 fields have been served. The program has a 90 percent retention rate -- more than double the national rate. Over 70 percent of the program graduates are employed on a university or college campus; 33 percent are majoring in science, math, and technology, and 33 percent in the social and behavioral sciences.

Planned Activities

The second statewide conference for participants of the Governor's Minority Student College Preparation program will be held June 2002 at Murray State University.

Northern Kentucky University will host the 15th Annual Academically Proficient African American High School Junior and Senior Conference June 14-15, 2002. Approximately 300 students, parents, and college representatives from across Kentucky are expected to participate.

The next meeting of the council's Committee on Equal Opportunities is Monday, April 15, 2002, in Meeting Room A at the council offices in Frankfort.

Staff preparation by Rana Johnson